

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

PUBLIC COMMENTS - CANNON FALLS - 6:30 - MAY 6, 2010

In the Matter of the Application by Xcel Energy for a
Route Permit for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV
Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-09-1448

May 6, 2010

Grandpa's Event Center
31846 65th Avenue
Cannon Falls, Minnesota

1 I N D E X - PLAINVIEW - 6:30 - MAY 6, 2010

2	WITNESS	PAGE
3	Andy Sandstrom	3
4	Mairi Doerr	4, 20
5	Bill Betcher	8
6	Robert Eney	10, 25
7	Karen Bjorngaard	13
8	Melissa Driscoll	16
9	Michelle Sandstrom	19
10	Paul Kalass	23

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 MR. LANGAN: Okay. What we want to do
2 now is take your comments or questions. What we
3 will do is ask you to come up to the front of the
4 room and speak into the microphone. We'll ask you
5 to state your name and spell it. And then we'll ask
6 that folks speak one at a time so that the court
7 reporter can take down your questions or your
8 comments.

9 If you're unable to come up to the
10 microphone, just let me know and I can bring the
11 microphone back to you. But it does help us if
12 you're able to come up to the microphone, and it
13 helps the court reporter record your comments or
14 questions.

15 We'll start with those who registered.
16 And then -- but everybody will get a chance to ask a
17 question.

18 Okay. This is Michelle Sandstrom.

19 MR. SANDSTROM: She's too scared. Hi, my
20 name is Andy Sandstrom. I just think that it
21 crosses by our house and it's going to be on the
22 other side. But we've talked to the guys back there
23 and got some maps. So we're going to draw them and
24 send them in to you guys. So really we don't need
25 to talk.

1 MR. LANGAN: Thank you for that. That's
2 great. The maps help. And you can either drop
3 those off with us tonight or send them in via
4 e-mail. And again, remember to include an
5 explanation and some rationale behind it. Thank
6 you.

7 Okay. That was the one speaker that we
8 had registered. And so what we'll try and do is
9 just do a show of hands. So if you want to raise
10 your hand to ask a question or provide a comment,
11 feel free, and we'll call you up to the front. Go
12 ahead. In the green, come on up.

13 MS. DOERR: Mairi Doerr, D-O-E-R-R.
14 Mairi is spelled M-A-I-R-I. I'm curious about, you
15 had spoken about the wind projects and saying that
16 that wasn't part of your project, I guess. And then
17 I'm understanding that these lines, these structures
18 that potentially could carry these lines could
19 accommodate carrying the transmission from wind
20 turbines.

21 So it strikes me as why wouldn't you know
22 about the wind projects and would you not be paying
23 attention to the potential of that transmission?
24 You know, if in fact these transmission lines are
25 necessary.

1 MR. LANGAN: Sure, sure. And I'll
2 have -- I'll have Tom re-explain that to you -- for
3 you. But for our part, actually, our office does
4 evaluate and does do a permitting process and an
5 environmental review process on those individual
6 wind farm projects. They -- but they aren't part of
7 this proposal tonight. The permitting for this
8 project and the environmental review is focusing on
9 the transmission project itself.

10 And maybe before I start going too far
11 down the road, Tom can explain a little bit more
12 about what the connection is ultimately between wind
13 and transmission.

14 MR. HILLSTROM: Yeah, I can take a stab
15 at this. We had a discussion about this last night,
16 too, and it gets into a very complicated answer.
17 But I'll start with the simple stuff that I know
18 about.

19 At some point during the development of a
20 wind project they do have to figure out where
21 they're going to connect into the transmission
22 system. And they can't just connect into the line,
23 they need to connect into a substation. So either
24 they build a new substation or they connect into an
25 existing substation.

1 Now, that act of them connecting into a
2 substation is managed by an organization called the
3 Midwest Independent System Operator. Some people
4 call it MISO. And that is the method that's used to
5 manage which wind developments gets allowed to come
6 on the transmission system.

7 Now, the planning for which wind farms
8 develop and where they develop is a very complicated
9 thing and there's not -- there's not, from what I
10 understand, there's not an overall, overarching
11 agency that plans for all that. It's a mixture of
12 various agencies and different ways that they're
13 regulated. So there's not -- there's not a real
14 simple answer that I can talk about. It's very
15 complicated.

16 But you're right, the wind developments
17 that do come about have to use a transmission system
18 and it's likely that they would aim for the areas
19 that we're developing substations in in order to
20 connect onto the line, if they're going to connect
21 onto the line that we build. Either a substation
22 that we build or an existing substation that's
23 already out there somewhere.

24 MS. DOERR: It seems like collaboration
25 would make a lot of sense, wouldn't it?

1 MR. HILLSTROM: Well, it does in the
2 since of managing where wind develops in the state.
3 But when we develop our projects, we do not take
4 into account any specific wind development. We
5 develop our projects to solve certain needs. And
6 this project was developed to solve needs in -- for
7 more power that's needed in the city of Rochester
8 and the area surrounding Rochester and to satisfy an
9 increasing need for power in the area around
10 La Crosse and Winona and outskirts of those cities.

11 So that was the main driver of the need
12 for this project. But this project also does help
13 the regional reliability of the transmission system
14 and it also allows more wind to come onto the
15 system. But it wasn't developed for any particular
16 wind development or any particular area that we
17 thought -- we thought it would be developing into
18 wind.

19 MS. DOERR: Could I just follow that up?
20 If -- are the existing 169 (sic) volt towers
21 sufficient to also transmit that power, if these
22 higher towers are not deemed necessary?

23 MR. HILLSTROM: The question was are the
24 161 lines going to be used for wind transmission?
25 And that's -- they weren't developed for that, but

1 some wind power may flow on those lines. The
2 purpose of the 161 lines was developed to move power
3 from that substation between Hampton -- or not
4 Hampton -- Zumbrota and Pine Island down into
5 Rochester. So it doesn't really matter where that
6 power is being generated, it's just to get it off
7 that big 345 system into the city of Rochester.

8 MS. DOERR: Thank you.

9 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Thank you for the
10 question. And I will ask, it does make life a lot
11 easier for the court reporter if we can just ask the
12 questions on the microphone. If we can just try and
13 do that, I think that makes life easier.

14 Okay. I know I had a couple other hands
15 up before that question or comment, but you may have
16 to raise them again because I don't remember who.

17 Okay. I think just back here. You,
18 please, sir. I think you had your hand up first,
19 please. We'll get to the front row after.

20 MR. BETCHER: Yeah, I'm Bill Betcher.
21 B-E-T-C-H-E-R. And I'm representing St. Paul's
22 Church and School. And I've got -- you know, we're
23 right -- well, right next to Sandstrom's auto repair
24 also, right on the other side of the freeway there.
25 And I noticed in the *Beacon*, this last issue, that

1 they actually moved the line up by Hampton up there
2 because of the Buddhist temple and the residential
3 area, they moved it one mile to the north.

4 Now, I know that area. Not real well,
5 but I know it somewhat. I don't think that that is
6 any more populated than what that housing
7 development over there is. Now, we've got a school
8 there, which we've got 55 students in the school and
9 we're growing. I think that should come into
10 consideration in what you're looking at also.

11 And I also have one other comment, and I
12 know it really doesn't have anything to do with me,
13 but how high are these poles?

14 MR. LANGAN: Thank you. The -- there are
15 two different heights; one height for the 345 line,
16 one for the 161 kilovolt line. The 345 line, the
17 single pole structures can be as tall as 170 feet.
18 I think the majority of them are 150 feet, but
19 they'll be as tall at 170 feet in some locations
20 based on topography and other site considerations.
21 With the 161 line, the tallest is 110, but I think
22 it's more like 80 or 90 feet; 80 feet for the height
23 of the 161 structures.

24 MR. BETCHER: Okay. The reason that I'm
25 asking that is I don't know if it's been taken into

1 consideration, but the landing pad for that Mayo One
2 helicopter is right across the freeway from there.
3 Now, if I was a helicopter pilot and I was coming
4 into that landing site, I would not want -- there's
5 enough interference there. They do not need 180-
6 foot power line on the other side of the freeway to
7 go around. Because I'm close enough there, I see
8 them landing. When they come in, they come in from
9 the west just about all the time because they want
10 to stay, you know, away from the town, which is
11 understandable. I don't think they want that line
12 there. And I wish someone was here representing the
13 hospital. Maybe there is.

14 MR. LANGAN: Well, a comment has been
15 made on their behalf. So thank you. Thank you.

16 MR. BETCHER: Yep.

17 MR. LANGAN: Sir?

18 MR. ENEDY: My name is Robert Enedy,
19 E-N-E-D-Y. If you could, could you pull the slide
20 that shows the overall routing?

21 MR. LANGAN: Sure.

22 MR. ENEDY: It's a two-part question in
23 terms of you have an alternate and a preferred
24 route. And it may say in there, in the written
25 dialogue, what the criteria would be in selecting

1 your alternate or preferred. I did not see a
2 explanation of is it an all or nothing for alternate
3 or preferred? And if it is not an all or nothing,
4 what are the segment lines that may be considered in
5 terms of alternate on one area, preferred on
6 another? Could you further describe that?

7 MR. LANGAN: Thank you. Yeah, thanks a
8 lot for bringing that up. Somehow that did not make
9 it into my presentation tonight, and that's an
10 oversight on my part.

11 When a line of this capacity and this
12 length is proposed to our office and the Public
13 Utilities Commission, and under our full permitting
14 process procedures, the applicant needs to submit a
15 preferred route -- has to submit two routes and name
16 one of them a preferred route. So preferred route
17 and one alternate route. They can exceed that, in
18 the case of that area around the Zumbro River where
19 they propose three different ways to get across the
20 river there. But it has to be a preferred route and
21 an alternate route.

22 The preferred route -- again, state rule
23 requires them to name one preferred. Once it gets
24 into our permitting process each route is reviewed
25 using the same criteria. So there is not really a

1 preferred route from our review of the project and
2 from the Public Utilities Commission review of the
3 project. They are measuring it against the same --
4 they are measuring each route under the same
5 criteria. Each would be equal in their eyes until a
6 record is developed to show which reduces the impact
7 to the extent possible.

8 So it's a requirement for the utilities
9 that they name one of them the preferred. There are
10 certain criteria--maybe Tom could talk about that--
11 why one gets chosen as preferred over another at
12 that stage. But you all should know that they are
13 both reviewed equally under our state review
14 process. They are reviewed with the same criteria.

15 MR. HILLSTROM: And I'll just add to
16 Matt's comments, that when we express a preference,
17 when we identify one of those as a preferred route,
18 we do it based on that systematic analysis, that
19 very scientific analysis, using those tables and the
20 numerical analysis.

21 And the other thing that you might be
22 asking is if the preferred route is chosen in one
23 section, does that carry through to the preferred
24 route in the entire project? And the answer to that
25 is no. These can be mixed and matched. New

1 segments can be introduced. And so it's all open
2 for study, like Matt said.

3 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Thank you.

4 Any other questions or comments? Back
5 here.

6 MS. BJORNGAARD: Karen Bjorngaard.

7 K-A-R-E-N. B-J-O-R-N-G-A-A-R-D. Kind of one of
8 those two-part questions.

9 Are there plans to relocate, buy out
10 people who are in that 150- or 300-foot realm?

11 MR. LANGAN: Okay.

12 MS. BJORNGAARD: And if you're in that
13 1,000-foot realm around a proposed route, how do you
14 find out exactly how far you are from the line? Has
15 that all been determined? Is that something if we
16 give you an address, you can know that?

17 MR. LANGAN: If you don't mind, I'll
18 answer the second part of the question and then turn
19 it over to Tom for the first part of your question.

20 And thank you for bringing that up. We
21 have been talking about a route permit tonight, and
22 a route actually has a specific width to it. Okay?
23 And that is a 1,000-foot route. It actually can be
24 up to a mile and a quarter by state rule. But the
25 applicant submits a route to us, and that is 1,000

1 feet. In order to construct it -- and we'll talk
2 about -- in order to construct the 345 kilovolt line
3 the utility will need a 150-foot right of way.

4 So it doesn't need 1,000 feet to
5 construct it, it would be to operate and maintain
6 that line, we'd need 150-foot right of way and
7 easement as it goes across the land. The route,
8 that 1,000 foot route is -- would allow -- it could
9 allow that -- it would allow the utility, if that
10 1,000-foot route were granted anywhere along the
11 preferred or the alternative, that the utility could
12 work with landowners to place that 150-foot route
13 right of way within that 1,000-foot route.

14 Now, what we've asked -- and actually,
15 and Xcel has done in this case, is they've put a lot
16 of work into that alignment that you see on the
17 maps, that you see -- well, that you see on the
18 maps. So you look at the shaded portion, which is
19 the 1,000-foot route on those back maps. Okay. And
20 then you've got the purple line going down pretty
21 much the middle of those, and that's the alignment.
22 And Xcel Energy has proposed that as a proposed
23 alignment.

24 If, at the end of all this process, if
25 that route were chosen, that -- based on the

1 information they have and their analysis over these
2 last two years, that's where they propose to put it.
3 Now, if there's a very good reason that that needs
4 to move somewhere within that route, that's a
5 possibility. But frankly, we encourage Xcel to
6 provide that alignment and put that work in leading
7 up to this process. It creates good discussion here
8 when you see where that line is intended to go.

9 But that route has a width to it to allow
10 some flexibility within there, so that they can work
11 with the landowners once a route is eventually
12 approved.

13 MS. BJORNGAARD: Right. The first part
14 then was if people are in that 150- to 300-foot from
15 the route or the line itself, is there re-location?
16 Is there buyout? Is there anything that happens?

17 MR. HILLSTROM: Well, like Matt said,
18 we've put enough work into these routes to know that
19 that will not be necessary. We've had engineers do
20 a preliminary design on these projects, and that
21 means they've figured out where these lines can be
22 built without removing any houses. And the answer
23 to that is yes, we can build this entire project
24 without having to remove any houses.

25 And what Matt mentioned about the

1 easement width, that's the area we're talking about
2 as far as not -- the easement -- the 150-foot
3 easement, which is 75 feet on either side of the
4 pole, has to be maintained clear of trees and
5 structures, just to make sure that there's enough
6 safety clearance from the wires to any different
7 structures.

8 So what I'm saying is that our engineers
9 tell us that they can build a line. There are no
10 homes that have to be removed. And when I say that,
11 that means there are no homes within 75 feet of that
12 centerline.

13 MS. BJORNGAARD: So in other words, the
14 safety feature is already built into that for those
15 people living right there?

16 MR. HILLSTROM: Right. If you're beyond
17 75 feet, the houses can be there.

18 MS. BJORNGAARD: All right.

19 MR. LANGAN: Thank you. Other questions
20 or comments? And/or comments? Please.

21 MS. DRISCOLL: All right. My name is
22 Melissa, M-E-L-I-S-S-A, Driscoll, D-R-I-S-C-O-L-L.

23 And I guess my main question is it feels
24 to me like you guys should be selling it to us. Why
25 is this even needed? And I guess I looked through

1 the beginning of the first book, the volume there,
2 to try to find a reason for -- and I understand the
3 three reasons given. But I still feel like Xcel
4 needs to sell us on how much energy savings have
5 they worked towards in these different communities.

6 I just feel like we need to use less
7 energy, use less energy in general. And I'm hoping
8 that Xcel, even though it's not in their interests
9 of making more money, that they're really out there
10 selling the idea of using less energy which, I don't
11 know if they'll ever do. But that's my question, I
12 guess.

13 MR. LANGAN: Okay. All right. Good.
14 Tom do you want to? Or --

15 MR. STEVENSON: Well, we can speak
16 sometime in more detail about the need. One reason
17 there's no sell in this document, it's a route
18 document. We already had a need proceeding with the
19 CapX projects; went through the certificate of need
20 process before the Public Utilities Commission, and
21 there's testimony. And the Public Utilities
22 Commission made their decision last May, I think it
23 was. That's where all that information about need
24 was. This document then now turns specifically to
25 the focus on routing. That's why you don't see the

1 sell.

2 MS. DRISCOLL: Okay.

3 MR. STEVENSON: Tom touched on the three
4 needs. There's a reliability need, and that's the
5 chief driver of this need. There's other CapX
6 projects that are -- one at Brookings, South Dakota
7 was more tied to generation. But this one has a
8 need component in Rochester and the rural areas
9 around it, and Winona and La Crosse and the rural
10 areas around there, there's a reliability need and
11 that's what was reviewed in the certificate of need
12 process some months ago.

13 MS. DRISCOLL: So during that process is
14 there a lot of talk about how to reduce energy use?

15 MR. STEVENSON: Yes, there were things
16 about conservation plans that had to be filed and
17 there were intervening parties, at least three, four
18 maybe, that testified their opinion in front of an
19 administrative law judge and she deliberated and
20 made a recommendation. And then the parties also
21 got to make their case to the Public Utilities
22 Commission.

23 MS. DRISCOLL: All right.

24 MS. OVERLAND: The Appellate Court.

25 MR. STEVENSON: What did she say?

1 MS. OVERLAND: The Appellate Court.

2 MR. LANGAN: Okay. I think what that is
3 is the -- we're talking about the certificate of
4 need. And that is it is one of two proceedings that
5 go through the Public Utilities Commission on these,
6 on these proposals. And so a need has to be
7 established. And they do talk about conservation
8 measures, alternatives to how to distribute that
9 energy and how to increase the reliability. And so
10 all those things do get considered. When a need has
11 been established, then if the project is needed,
12 then it is where should it go, and to reduce the
13 impacts to the extent possible.

14 The Public Utilities Commission approved
15 that certificate of need last May. There is a
16 challenge to that certificate of need ongoing right
17 now. And the decision has not been made yet on that
18 challenge.

19 Yes, back here.

20 MS. SANDSTROM: Michelle Sandstrom. We
21 were told tonight that there is a so-called buy the
22 farm option which, as it was explained to me, as I
23 understood it, if you were within 150 feet of that
24 pole, if any part of your land touched that, you had
25 the option to be bought out or -- but that's not the

1 answer that I heard Tom give when somebody else
2 asked. Could you explain that?

3 MR. LANGAN: Sure. Tom, do you want to
4 explain that?

5 MR. HILLSTROM: Yeah. You're absolutely
6 right about that. What I explained is that the
7 easement width is 150 feet. And that means that
8 beyond 75 feet -- or inside of 75 feet of the
9 centerline of the project there can't be houses,
10 there can't be tall trees. But if we -- if we get
11 approved to build this project and the route goes
12 across your property and that means we have to buy
13 an easement from you, you do have that choice. That
14 buy the farm bill is right. If the utilities need
15 to buy an easement from you, you can say I don't
16 want this line on my property, I can't live here
17 anymore. The utility, therefore, has to buy my
18 entire property.

19 MS. SANDSTROM: Thank you.

20 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Thank you. Other
21 comments and/or questions?

22 MS. DOERR: Do you want me to come up?
23 Mairi Doerr. My second question was you had spoken
24 about existing transmission corridors, and it was
25 specifically heading over to Alma. I was just

1 wondering, you know, in some cases you are working
2 on existing transmission corridors, but not the
3 whole way. So why do you not just use it the whole
4 way? Existing transmission corridor.

5 MR. LANGAN: Existing transmission
6 corridors, why doesn't the line follow existing
7 transmission corridors.

8 MS. DOERR: Especially since you said the
9 poles could be replaced, because you said that in
10 that stretch we could double up and so --

11 MR. LANGAN: Yep.

12 MS. DOERR: So why don't you just take
13 down the old poles and then put up the new one and
14 put double lines, if you're going to do it?

15 MR. HILLSTROM: If we could do that, we
16 sure would. And I can point to some areas where we
17 are proposing to do that. I mentioned this area
18 leading to the river near Alma. There is also a
19 majority of the route that follows Highway 52,
20 follows an existing transmission line. And that
21 would be the proposal there. If you can think about
22 driving south from here, there's that smaller
23 transmission line, that 69 kilovolts. And our route
24 follows that transmission line and it would remove
25 the bulk of that transmission line and rebuild it,

1 like I talked about before, as a consolidated
2 structure.

3 So we are doing that on 52. We're doing
4 it leading to the river. And if we could find a
5 transmission line that connected those two areas, we
6 would use that too. But there's not one out there
7 that we could follow. And what we -- there are some
8 cases where we can't follow existing transmission
9 lines because, like we talked about, one of the big
10 reasons for this project is reliability. And the
11 way reliability is determined is our engineers look
12 at our system and try to figure out these computer
13 models and look at what would happen to the system
14 if any one element of the system was taken out of
15 service. And the system has to be reliable even
16 with any one of its elements taken out of service.

17 But when you combine two lines on the one
18 structure, those two lines suddenly become a single
19 element and if the reliability studies see that
20 taken out of service, it's both lines taken out of
21 service and, therefore, it's harder to maintain that
22 reliability, if you have two lines combined onto a
23 single circuit.

24 So that comes into play here only in --
25 it really didn't come into play at all in our route

1 selection. What -- that would come into play, say,
2 if we wanted to double circuit an existing 345 line
3 that runs north and south through here. And we
4 didn't propose that or we didn't study that.

5 So in a nutshell, if there were more
6 existing transmission lines that we could have
7 followed, we would have because we recognize that as
8 a really good opportunity to minimize the impacts.
9 Because it does make so much sense if we can, you
10 know, consolidate lines on a single corridor.

11 MR. LANGAN: Yes, sir.

12 MR. KALASS: Paul, P-A-U-L. Kalass,
13 K-A-L-A-S-S. This might be an elementary question,
14 I don't know. You say size of these lines, and it's
15 a number that doesn't mean anything to me. I worked
16 on survey crews for Soil/Water District and did a
17 lot of work for the Prairie Island here. And if I
18 was under a rod, a Fiberglas rod, up 15 feet, and I
19 walked underneath that line, I could always tell I
20 was under it because the hair on my arms would go
21 up.

22 Is the line that's coming by my house and
23 jut off 52 and bypass Zumbrota near my house, their
24 parcels of land are over-run. Is that the same
25 power line that's going to raise the hair on my arms

1 when I walk under it?

2 MR. LANGAN: Would you describe that as a
3 issue or impact that you would like to see us
4 evaluate in our document?

5 MS. DOERR: Say yes.

6 MR. KALASS: Yes. I don't know the
7 health reason, but it seems -- is this the thing I'm
8 going to have happen to me when I'm working in my
9 yard or whatever?

10 MR. LANGAN: Absolutely, in our
11 environmental document we're going to look at stray
12 voltage. You know, do -- let me start out by saying
13 there's lots of available studies out there right
14 now on these types of issues that you're raising
15 right now. And --

16 MR. KALASS: Do you know the size of the
17 line that comes out of Prairie Island?

18 MR. LANGAN: I think it's a 345 kilovolt
19 line.

20 MR. KALASS: Is that what we're talking
21 about here?

22 MR. LANGAN: Yeah, that's what we're
23 talking about here.

24 MR. KALASS: Okay. Thank you.

25 MR. LANGAN: Yes, sir.

1 Okay. Other questions and/or comments?

2 MR. ENEDY: Robert Enedy again. Could
3 you elaborate a little bit further on that? When
4 you're saying there's a 75-foot right of way needed
5 for the utility line itself, that sounds like a
6 mechanical safety issue in terms of space that's not
7 going to interfere with the line. Can you right now
8 speak to what Xcel looks at as an acceptable
9 distance for housing area to be in, in terms of I
10 don't want my hair standing on the end of my arm 24
11 hours a day, seven days a week, if I decide not to
12 leave my house.

13 Obviously you need more than 75 feet from
14 your house to your line. What type of a buffer does
15 Xcel look to in routing these in terms of the buyout
16 or the easement or that sort of thing? Can you
17 elaborate on that any bit further?

18 MR. LANGAN: Tom, if you want to talk
19 about that. Again, that is something we will
20 provide information on in that document. We're
21 going to look at that. But I can have Tom give you
22 a direct answer here.

23 MR. HILLSTROM: Right. And 75 feet is
24 the minimum distance that houses can be to the line.
25 And you're right, that is based on that safety

1 clearance, the electrical clearance. In developing
2 our routes the proximity of homes was one of the
3 priority factors that we used. And what I'm saying
4 is that when we develop these routes we really do
5 our best to try to keep the lines away from houses
6 as much as possible. So that 75 feet is the
7 minimum. And in most cases the houses aren't that
8 close.

9 Now, if -- if a house was 75 feet away
10 from the line and there was no way to adjust that
11 line, that house could stay there. There's no --
12 there's no regulation or requirement that a house be
13 farther than 75 feet away. And the concerns that
14 have been raised here, that Matt has talked about,
15 the hair standing on your arms is probably an
16 example of a static electricity charge.

17 There are other issues that Matt had on
18 his board that will be studied as well. And that's
19 part of the analysis that Matt and I will do. But
20 in a nutshell, there is no other kind of standard,
21 other than that 75-foot minimum distance.

22 MR. KALASS: Can I further the question
23 then to ask: Does that unspecified area from the 75
24 feet come into play in terms of the buy-the-farm-out
25 then? Or who is the deciding person to say, you

1 know what? I feel 250 feet is okay or 500 feet.
2 And how -- how is the landowner going to be able to
3 turn around and represent themselves to Xcel or
4 whomever it is and say I don't feel that this is
5 safe that I'm within 300 feet of the centerline of
6 the power line. Or when does that come into play?
7 And particularly when does it come into play on the
8 flow diagram that you gave us earlier in terms of
9 when you decide the routes and when that
10 notification comes? Is it when the agent comes to
11 the door and says, hey, you have a power line coming
12 behind your house and it's less than 150 feet, or --
13 can you clarify that any more?

14 MR. HILLSTROM: Do you want me to address
15 that?

16 MR. LANGAN: Sure.

17 MR. HILLSTROM: The way the timeline
18 works is that we proposed our routes, and this is
19 the scoping process, maybe new routes will be added
20 to the ones we've proposed. The OES does their
21 environmental impact statement. In that document
22 they present the results of their studies, including
23 any kind of concerns that you may have, health
24 concerns, the static electricity concern. That
25 would be included in the EIS that they produce, and

1 you'll have a chance to study that.

2 Now, after that EIS is produced there
3 will be a couple of more public meetings you can
4 come to and get more information and ask more
5 questions, and then ultimately, after all that is
6 done, it's the Public Utility Commission that
7 decides which route is approved. And now if that
8 route is approved, that does happen across your
9 property, then the company does their engineering
10 and then only after that is approved, then the real
11 estate agent would come out and approach you and
12 tell you that the utility needed to buy an easement
13 from you.

14 And it would be at that point where you
15 would have access to all those documents that have
16 already been produced and you can do your own
17 research and you can -- the utility will tell you
18 where the line will go, how much easement they will
19 need to purchase from you, and then at that point
20 you can make your decision on, you know, whatever
21 you think is warranted.

22 MR. KALASS: Okay.

23 MR. LANGAN: I guess I get to ask a
24 question. Would you like us to review in the
25 document the effects that you're talking about at

1 varying distances away from the line?

2 MR. KALASS: That was going to be my next
3 question, was are you currently making a study or
4 are you going to use an already published study from
5 some source that says, hey, this is how far you can
6 stand from a power line all day and not be affected?

7 MR. LANGAN: We rely on existing studies,
8 yes. These studies are -- these have been
9 studied -- these issues have been studied for about
10 30 years or so. The -- but all of the studies that
11 we use, or maybe even done, are 30 years old. There
12 are relatively current studies, they're performed by
13 the World Health Organization, the Minnesota
14 Department of Health, as well as some information
15 we've gathered from the surrounding states, regions
16 that use that information there. We also have past
17 review documents that we can draw from as well.

18 And so, yes, we look at any existing
19 studies. If there are new studies available at the
20 time that we're conducting our review, we
21 incorporate that information as well.

22 And so that's how we conduct that review.
23 And I think what we can do is just look at varying
24 distances, you know, directly underneath the line to
25 outside the right of way to a little bit further and

1 we can describe that in the draft document and then
2 we would ask you to react to what you see there and
3 share information or comments at that point.

4 MR. KALASS: Can you tell us from
5 previous projects what that typical distance has
6 been in terms of we have come across and said this
7 is an area where you're no longer affected by this
8 power line?

9 MR. HILLSTROM: Yeah, as a matter of
10 fact, in our permit application there is a section
11 about electromagnetic fields, and I think that's
12 what we're talking about here. The electromagnetic
13 fields are the effect that people are most concerned
14 about when it comes down to health effects. In our
15 permit application we've included a chart of what we
16 predict those EMF levels to be at different distance
17 intervals. So you can look at that document and see
18 what the EMF levels would be at various distances
19 from the line.

20 MR. KALASS: Okay.

21 MR. LANGAN: Thank you for that. Other
22 questions or comments? Questions and comments? .
23 Okay. I'm not seeing anyone raise their hand. But,
24 what we will do is we'll stick around for a little
25 while. If you would like to come up and speak with

1 any of us individually, feel free to do so. If you
2 didn't get a chance to look at the maps in back, you
3 can do that. If you would like to print a map for
4 any comments that you continue to make, we have that
5 service available in back.

6 I'll just remind folks that you can leave
7 written comments with us tonight, you can mail them
8 in to me by 4:30 p.m. on May 20th. If you have any
9 questions before that comment period ends, just give
10 my a call, give Ray, the public advisor, a call and
11 we'll answer those questions for you. But I really
12 appreciate you being out here tonight. Thank you
13 for coming out and participating. And thanks very
14 much.

15 (Hearing adjourned at 8:20.)
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

1 STATE OF MINNESOTA)
2 COUNTY OF DAKOTA) ss.

3
4
5
6 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

7
8
9 I, Janice Dickman, do hereby certify that
10 the above and foregoing transcript, consisting of
11 the preceding 31 pages, is a correct transcript of
12 my stenographic notes, and is a full, true and
13 complete transcript of the proceedings to the best
14 of my ability.

15 Dated: May 14, 2010
16
17
18
19

20 _____
21 Janice Dickman, RPR
22 Court Reporter
23
24
25